

FISH & WILDLIFE COMMISSION AGENDA ITEM COVER SHEET

Meeting Date: February 12, 2015

Agenda Item: 2015 Deer Regulations

Division: Wildlife

Action Needed: Final

Time Needed on Agenda for this Presentation: 30 minutes

Background

Season structures and hunting district boundaries for deer are adopted biennially in odd-numbered years between December and February. The Commission agreed, however, to consider proposals outside of the regular cycle to address specific issues. FWP proposes the following changes in the opportunity to harvest antlerless mule deer during the 2015 season. Please note that the final proposal for Region 6 differs from that proposed in December. Based on post-season surveys, the region seeks to drop four additional hunting districts—HDs 600, 611, 621 and 622—from the proposal to allow either-sex mule deer on the general license. All other portions of FWP's proposal for the 2015 deer season remain the same as proposed in December. FWP's final proposal is as follows:

Region 3

- HD 300 - propose issuing 75 mule deer B-licenses to address over-browsing and to follow AHM.
- HD 331 - propose issuing 200 mule deer B-licenses to address over-browsing and to follow AHM.

Region 6

- All Region 6 HDs except HDs 600, 611, 621, 622 and 652 - propose allowing either-sex mule deer on the general license to follow AHM and address hunters' concerns about overharvesting bucks with the current buck-only season.

Region 7

- All Region 7 HDs - propose issuing some mule deer B-licenses to follow AHM and provide the tools to address game damage. The number of B-licenses issued in each HD would vary and depend on the spring 2015 deer surveys. **If the spring 2015 surveys show deer numbers below long-term average in a hunting district then no B-licenses would be issued for that district.** If the population is at or above long-term average then the number of B-licenses issued would be on a sliding scale and depend upon by how much the population exceeds the long-term average.

Public Involvement Process & Results

In addition to public comment at the December Commission meeting, public comment ran through Jan. 23. FWP received 41 comments. Twenty-two spoke to the specific FWP proposals and about ¾ opposed increased B-licenses. Others addressed a variety of subjects including point restrictions, hunter numbers, trend counts and other matters. All comments were forwarded to the Commission.

Alternatives and Analysis

Proposals may be adopted as proposed, with adjustment, with additions, with deletions or no change from 2014 (status quo). No change would challenge the supporting justifications behind proposals.

Agency Recommendation & Rationale

Rationales for individual proposals are included in Commission information packets and may be further articulated at the Feb.12 Commission meeting.

Proposed Motion

I move the Commission adopt the final 2015 deer hunting seasons and hunting districts as presented by FWP. I also move to adopt all other portions of the previous 2014-2015 deer season regulations not affected by the Commission's actions today.